(Reservation of Articles for Production) Act, 1985 and reserved 22 items for Exclusive production by handlooms. A number of powerloom organisations all over the country have filled Writ petition against the handloom reservation notifications and also against cettain provisions of the Handloom Reservation Act in various High Courts and obtained stay orders. Since the point of Law involved in all the cases was the same. These petitions were transferred to Supreme Court of India and are now at the final stage of hearing. Government is taking vigorous steps to get the stay orders pending before the Supreme Court vacated.

In response to the points made by the aforesaid delegation of handloom weavers a meeting was convened of all concerned by the Textile Minister of 17th July, 1989. In this meeting the representatives of the Associations of spinning mills have agreed to take steps to arrest further rise in prices of yarn and supply yarn on priority to the National Handloom Development Corporation, on the basis of film advance indents. They also undertook to increase the production of hank yarn in the counts which are currently in short supply and supply them at competitive prices. It has further been decided to set up a Yarn Price Monitoring Committee with a view to (a) monitor the price fluctuations of yarn (b) assess availability of crucial units of hank yarn and (c) ensure production of hank yarn in accordance with the Hank Yarn Obligation Scheme. The Committee will be headed by the Textile Commissioner and will consist of Development Commissioner for Handlooms, representatives of Associations of spinning mills and other connected interests. The Committee will meet every quarter.

Smuggling on the Indo-Pak Border

*54. DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY :
SHRIMATI RATAN KUMARI :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a sudden spurt in the smuggling activities on the Indo-Pak border along Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat ;

(b) if so, what are the main reasons therefor ; and

(c) what precautionary measures have been taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANJA) : (a) and (b) The value of contraband goods seized by the Customs Authoritiy in the Indo-Pak sector of the land borders during the last few years is given below :—

Year	Value (Rs. in crores)
1985	15.73
1986	26.35
1987	31.71
1988	26.39
1989	17.21
(Upto April)	(Provisional)

The Increase in the value of seizures effected in 1989 need not necessarily mean a spurt in smuggling activities and it could be due to intensified anti-smuggling effort.

(c) The anti-smuggling drive has been intensified and the anti-smuggling machinery throughout

the country especially in the vulnerable areas of the land borders as also at the international airports has been geared up. Close co-ordination is being maintained with all the agencies concerned which operate in the border areas in the detection and prevention of smuggling. Sophisticated equipment like : X-ray Baggage Machines, Metal Detectors and night vision binoculars are being increasingly used. Administrative re-crganisatin has been undertaken to strengthen the anti-smuggling effort on the Indo-Pak border and the creation of two preventive sub-collectorates with Head Quarters at Jodhpur and Amritsar respectively has been sanctioned.

Amendment of the Central Sales Tax Act

*55. SHRI SURESH KALMADI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received any proposals from the State Governments of the Northern Region for amending the Central Sales Tax Act so as to cover the Consignment tax also ;

(b) if so, what are the detail thereof ; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANJA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) In the Chief Ministers Conference held on 9th and 10th February, 1989, it was resolved by consensus that a separates bill for levy of consignment tax be introduced in the Parliament in the Monsoon Session this year.

Bomb blast at New Delhi Railway Station

*56. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA :

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether recently there was an incident of bomb blast at the New Delhi Railway Station resulting in some deaths and injuries ; if so, what are the details thereof ;

(b) whether it was the handiwork of Punjab terrorists and whether Government had any prior information about the possibility of such an incident ; if so, what preventive measures were taken by Government in this regard ;

(c) whether the culprits have since been apprehended ; if so, what are the details thereof ;

(d) what steps have been taken to gear up security measures at the New Delhi and other Railway Stations to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in future ; and

(e) whether any *ex-gratia* payment has been made to the affected families?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI BUTA SINGH) : (a) to (e) A powerful explosion took place at the New Delhi Railway Station on 12-6-1989. 10 persons were killed and 55 persons were injured. 3 persons viz. (i) Manjit Singh of New Delhi, (ii) Nishan Singh of Amritsar and (iii) Dalbir Singh of Amritsar involved in this case were apprehended. The case has also since been challaned by the Delhi Police. It is correct that it was the handiwork of Punjab Terrorists. However, no specific information about this incident was available. Ex-gratia payments were made to the concerned